

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides information regarding the background of the research, statement of the problem of the research, objectives of the research, significances of the research, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Red Dead Redemption 2 (RDR2) is a video game developed by Rockstar Games and released in 2018. It is one of the most anticipated and acclaimed games in the gaming industry, thanks to its deep narrative, complex characters, and immersive open world. *RDR2* is set in the late 19th century, depicting the lives of outlaws in the context of the American Wild West. Players take on the role of Arthur Morgan, a member of the Van der Linde gang, who is caught in a conflict between his desire to live a free life and the pressures of authority and personal morality.

One of the interesting aspects of *RDR2* is its application of the ludonarrative theory, which explains the relationship between gameplay and narrative in games. This theory, introduced by Clint Hocking, highlights the potential for misalignment between what the player does in gameplay and the story the game is telling. In the context of *RDR2*, the player's moral decisions have a significant impact on the progression of the story and interactions with the game world. This mechanism creates an experience where the player's good or bad actions not only affect the outcome of missions but also shape the character of Arthur Morgan and how he is perceived by other characters in the game.

Ludonarrative dissonance, refers to the disconnect between the story conveyed through non interactive elements (such as cutscenes and dialogue) and the actions players are encouraged to perform during gameplay. This dissonance arises when gameplay mechanics contradict the narrative themes or character motivations presented in the story (Clint Hocking, 2007). For example, a game may

depict a character as a hero while requiring players to engage in violent actions that conflict with this portrayal.

In *RDR2*, there is an honor system that judges the player's actions based on their moral choices. If the player does good deeds, they will gain benefits in the form of positive interactions with NPCs and better story development. Conversely, evil actions can lead to negative consequences, such as avoidance or hostility from other characters. This creates a cycle where gameplay and narrative support each other, increasing the emotional depth of the gaming experience.

The importance of ludonarrative in *RDR2* is also evident in how the game invites players to reflect on their actions. Players not only play the role of lawbreakers but are also faced with complex moral dilemmas. Through interactions with various characters and situations, Arthur Morgan struggles to find his identity and face the consequences of his choices. Thus, *RDR2* offers not only entertainment but also reflections on morality and humanity.

With this background, this study aims to analyze the application of ludonarrative theory in *Red Dead Redemption 2*, as well as how gameplay elements support a deep and complex narrative. This study is expected to provide new insights into the relationship between gameplay and story in modern video games and their impact on player experience.

Games can be considered as part of literary works because they contain various intrinsic elements that are the same as traditional literature. In video games, there are elements such as plot, theme, setting, characters, and point of view that form a deep narrative. As stated in the article, *in a video game product, all of these literary elements can also be fulfilled and the intrinsic elements in games will be much more detailed than other literary works*. Furthermore, games provide an interactive experience where players are not only spectators, but also play an active role in the story, making them part of a deeper narrative experience. This shows that video games are not just a means of entertainment, but also a medium that can preserve and introduce literary values to a new generation.

1.2 Statement of Problem

In studying the problems contained in the game Red Dead Redemption 2 from Rockstars Games, that tells the story about Arthur Morgan gang member of Van der Linde, who is caught in a conflict between the desire to live freely and the pressures of authority and personal morality. Hence, from the background of this research above, the researcher concluded that there are two questions that will be the main focuses of this research:

1. What is Arthur characterization in this Red Dead Redemption 2?
2. How does interactive social affect Arthur's character development in the story of Rockstar's Red Dead Redemption 2?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the formulation of the research question above, the researcher is intended:

1. To explain Arthur's characterization in Red Dead Redemption 2
2. To identify how interactive social affect Arthur character development in the story of Rockstar's Red Dead Redemption 2 game

1.4 Research Significances

Red Dead Redemption 2 (RDR2) is not only a landmark in gaming for its storytelling and immersive world but also serves as a significant case study in various fields such as wildlife education, empathy development, and historical representation. The research surrounding *RDR2* highlights its educational potential and cultural impact, making it a valuable subject for academic inquiry.

The significance of research on Red Dead Redemption 2 extends beyond its entertainment value. It serves as an important case study in wildlife education, empathy development, and historical representation. As gaming continues to evolve

as a medium, insights from *RDR2* can inform educational strategies and enhance our understanding of how interactive narratives shape player experiences and societal perceptions. The findings underscore the potential for video games to contribute meaningfully to learning and cultural discourse.

